Approved For Release 2008/07/02 : CIA-RDP79R00890A000400040012-6

DOCUMENT NO
CLASS. CHANGED TO: S C
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE 1-9-84 REVIEWER:

NSC BRIEFING 7 December 1954

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JAPANESE POLITICAL PROSPECTS

I. Resignation of Yoshida cabinet is culmination efforts of conservative opponents to overthrow prime minister.

A. For well over a year, conservatives have attempted to amalgamate into single well-disciplined party strong enough to bring political stability to Japan.

B. In November, however, these conservative efforts degenerated into anti-Yoshida movement.

II. On 24 November, Japan Democratic Party was inaugurated--composed of the former Progressive and Japan Liberal parties and some 37 dissidents from Yoshida's Liberal Party.

A. Ichiro Hatoyama became head of Democratic Party and party's choice for prime minister.

B. Shinsuke Kishi, wartime Tojo cabinet minister, is the moving force behind the new party.

III. Combination of 120 Japan Democrats with 134 Left and Right Socialists (chart) gave opposition more than enough votes to unseat Yoshida government by a no-confidence motion.

A. Yoshida, in stepping down before vote, bowed to pressure from his own party and from financial interests who viewed alternative of general election as both costly and likely only to benefit left-of-center parties.

25 YEAR
RE-REVIEW

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IV. Yoshida's ouster did not stem from opposition to his policies: charges of "pro-Americanism," "dictatorship," "scandal ridden" only window dressing.

A. Conservatives differ only in degree, not substance of policies; all recognize need for close co-operation with US.

B. Japan's political parties made up of small cliques, composed of leader and loyal followers, who federate into party organization.

C. Such other leaders simply impatient for their chance at power--Yoshida has been in too long.

V. Ichiro Hatoyama is probable new prime minister.

A. His selection dependent on Socialist support. Socialists now wavering because of Hatoyama's pro-rearmament stand.

B. If Socialists run own candidate, or abstain, Liberal Ogata will become premier.

C. However, Socialists likely to support Hatoyama as weaker candidate.

D. Compromise Conservative, such as Nomura (Independent) or Hayashi (Liberal) outside possibility.

VI. Hatoyama still partly paralyzed by a stroke suffered in 1952 will be figurehead.

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A. Man of great charm and personal warmth, has been very friendly in contacts with American officials.

B. Told press after Yoshida resignation: "Japan survives only because of" security alliance with US. Is strongly anti-Communist but favors diplomatic relations and expanded trade with Communist China and USSR.

VII. Form of government still not decided.

A. Hatoyama may appoint a coalition cabinet--include Ogata, Yoshida's deputy prime minister, in same post. This would suggest some sort of deal between Liberals and Democrats has been arranged.

B. He might form a minority government based only on his Democrats. Possible that Liberals may decide to sit on sidelines as opposition party, waiting for opportunity to assume power again.

VIII. Overthrow of Yoshida does not resolve difficulties besetting Japan's conservatives.'

A. Intense factionalism and bitter personal rivalries, due cliquish nature Japanese politics, may intensify, rather than lessen.

B. Formation coalition cabinet would denote uneasy truce at best.

C. Government of Democrats alone would mean that conservatives are still far from achieving amalgamation.

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IX. Prospects for stable government are dim.

A. Socialists expect new government to be mere caretaker regime, until time ripe for new elections.

B. Socialists will take role of harassing new government and may get half-hearted co-operation from Liberals in this course.

X. Meanwhile, drastic re-orientation Japan's foreign policy not possible.

A. New government will be forced to take cognizance of increased popular opinion for "normalizing" relations, both economic and political, with Orbit, particularly Communist China.

B. However, will continue policy of co-operation with US and West although such co-operation will be on "tougher," more nationalistic basis.

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